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FORTY YEARS OF ACTION
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A HISTORY OF THE
ORGANIZATION OF PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES
OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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OPEDA's Emblem, adopted in 1954, dates back to an eleventh century design which was evolved to illustrate a system of philosophy established more than four thousands years previously.

It was the belief that OPEDA's basic nature and purpose would be best exemplified by a design in which one element was colored black to represent the soil; the other green to represent the vegetative products of the soil. The emblem appears on letterheads, jewelry, newsletters, membership renewal cards, and brochures.

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FORTY YEARS OF ACTION

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Vivian Wiser
Economic Research Service
1915-cc

U. S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE
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FORTY YEARS OF ACTION

Beginnings of Employee Organizations

This year, 1969, the Organization of Professional Employees of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, popularly called OPEDA, celebrates its fortieth anniversary. These have been momentous years of change in the country as well as the United States Department of Agriculture. OPEDA has been in the mainstream.

Employee organizations in the Department date from early in this century. In 1906, the Immediate Relief Association was formed to meet personal financial crises of survivors of deceased employees. In 1912, a Rural Economics Club was considering the area of economics in agriculture. Four years later, Agriculture employees cooperated with those in several other Departments in organizing a Federal Employees Union as a subsidiary of the American Federation of Labor.

The agitation for reform became channelled through the efforts of the Joint Reclassification Commission, appointed in 1919 to standardize the job classification for Federal employees. Then the question arose "who would represent the scientific and technical people?" In practice, the Federal Employees Union was more attractive to clerical and administrative people than to the professional employees. The Federation refused to sponsor another Federal union for the scientific and technical people. Instead, a separate section was organized in 1919 under the leadership of Rodney H. True. Scientists from the Bureaus of Plant Industry, Animal Industry, Chemistry and Entomology became involved. However, when True left about a year later, the professional section became inactive. Some key people joined the Federal Club, organized in 1920 to raise standards of administration in the Federal and District Governments. In the field, some became active in the USDA Clubs which Secretaries Meredith and Henry C. Wallace had endorsed as a means of bringing employees from different bureaus together. These gave way, in some instances, to the Federal Business Associations, Interdepartmental groups whose primary interest was economy in Government. Generally, however, scientists and technical workers operated within their own special interest groups.

Employees of the Department of Agriculture had hoped to profit from the provisions of the Classification Act of 1923. The sense of frustration had reached the point in April 1928 that W.W. Stockberger, Director of Personnel and Business Administration, invited Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs of Bureaus to a meeting in the Office of the Director of Scientific Work, Albert F. Woods. The session on May 2 was to discuss ways and means of promoting the interests of employees "through organized and concerted effort."

The amended Classification Act of 1928 made general and permanent the wartime bonuses that some employees had received. Providing for inclusion of the field service in the revised classification, it prohibited any demotions. There were, however, still areas of dissatisfaction and areas where

improvements were needed. At a time when the Department of Agriculture was the major civilian Department employing scientists, many of its key professional people provided leadership in the movement to improve the position of Federal professional employees. They cooperated closely with the American Association for the Advancement of Science in attempting to develop "a collective viewpoint of the scientific and technical employees of the Federal Government." They also worked with a committee of the National Federation of Federal Employees, an affiliate of the American Federation of Labor.

OPEDA Is Established

In February 1929, when Congress was considering proposals to improve the retirement system and to standardize leave, Albert F. Woods, Director of Scientific Work, suggested that representatives from the various bureaus meet to discuss the Lehlbach bill to liberalize the retirement system and other questions. Out of this came the establishment of the Organization of Professional Employees of the United States Department of Agriculture (OPEDA), to represent this special group of Federal Employees.

On April 8, 1929, representatives from the various Bureaus and Offices voted to adopt an amended constitution that they had discussed in their Bureaus. On May 10, the Council, composed of two representatives from each Bureau and independent office of the Department, elected officers—all outstanding people in the department, as their successors have been.

President,

A.F. Woods

Director of Scientific Work

Vice President

C.C. Clark

Assistant Chief, Weather Bureau

Executive Committee

Milton S. Eisenhower

Director of Information

Roy Headley

Assistant Forester, Forest Service

Henry G. Knight

Chief, Bureau of Chemistry and Soils

Ruth O'Brien

Chief, Textile and Clothing Division, Bureau of Home Economics

E.W. Sheets

Chief, Animal Husbandry Division, Bureau of Animal Industry

W.W. Stockberger

Director of Personnel and Business Administration

The framework of OPEDA's operations evolved relatively quickly and has been adjusted as changing conditions required. As the officers travelled, they were encouraged to contact and speak to groups of members at field offices. Circular letters informed the members of important developments. Washington area employees had a special advantage, for they could attend special meetings such as the seminars held in February 1932 in the auditorium of the New National Museum, at which William McReynolds, Thomas N. Campbell, and W.W. Stockberger spoke. They were also anxious to have professional employees in other agencies form similar organizations.

Initially, the organization had no formal dues. Instead, as need arose, a 25 cent assessment was made on members. No definite membership list was kept in these early days. However, in 1931, it claimed over 1200 members, with some of them scattered across the country. All of the work was done on a volunteer basis. This proved inadequate. In order to expand the work, members were asked to help by paying a \$2.00 assessment, but any contribution was welcomed. In 1934, the council set the dues at \$2.00 a year, at a time of economic stress.

Early Activities

The officers representing this fluid group were confronted with difficult problems, but they went into action quickly. They contacted members of Congress and Congressional Committees in an effort to protect the interests of the employees they represented and to improve the image of the Federal employee. The Organization opposed any reduction in Federal salaries, for this was unjust to "already underpaid scientific and professional workers, and unfavorable in the long run to public interests." In view of the economic conditions, they accepted the payless furlough enacted by Congress in the Economy Act of June 30, 1932, as strategically more acceptable than a straight salary cut. In an attempt to stave off further adverse action, OPEDA undertook, early in 1933, a survey of scientific and professional employment in the Department. However, before this was completed, the new Congress had authorized President Roosevelt to cut Federal pay by 15 percent. OPEDA expressed its disappointment; regretted that it had not been allowed to take a formal stand before the bill reached the floor of Congress; and acknowledged that it would have been not only futile but unwise to have opposed the action.

Undaunted, the officers continued their study, drawing on a report of the Personnel Classification Board and a survey by the Office of Education. R.E. Marsh, President, sent a summary of it to Secretary Henry A. Wallace, describing it as "the first detailed study of classification for the Department on so comprehensive a scale."

OPEDA had watched the change of administration in 1933 and emphasized the importance of maintaining the stability of the merit system. Its officers requested the Director of Personnel and Business Administration

to urge the resumption of a normal promotion program early in 1934. They objected to the President's basing salary changes on the cost of living index, action that had adversely affected Federal employees whose pay had not been subject previously to economic advances or reverses. They urged that, as the economy improved, pay increases be given to reflect the change.

OPEDA took the lead in the late 1930's in getting Congress to break through the low rigid ceiling on annuities. This step was the basis for the present formula of 80 percent of the highest five-year average salary for 41+ years of service.

Changing emphases in the Department's work came at a crucial time in OPEDA's history. Scientific research was no longer so important. Greater attention was given to administration as the Department implemented the new action programs. However, some of the leaders of the organization had long been involved in administrative work. At that time, many higher grades were predicated upon the inclusion of administrative duties with scientific responsibility. Thus, they were concerned in an official capacity as well as in the status of leaders of OPEDA. The lines of development were, of necessity, flexible.

Standing committees were appointed to work on legislation, retirement, classification and compensation programs, and information and publicity. They were relatively inactive until after 1939. However, the Executive Committee had continued to work. In June 1939, its statement was presented to the President's Commission on Civil Service Improvement and explained by Stanley B. Fracker. Key issues included: recruiting, examination, training program, promotion on the basis of merit, advancement on the basis of research as well as administration, and an adequate retirement system. His presentation was so effective that it was reflected in recommendations of the committee and subsequent legislation. Basically, standing committees continued until 1958 when the constitution was amended to provide for vice presidents for professional, public service, and economic matters as chairmen of the committees.

Following a reorganization of OPEDA in late 1939, an Executive Secretary was employed for eight months to "handle the affairs of the Organization and to carry on a drive for membership," a drive that did not bring in sufficient funds to finance major activities for the rest of 1940. Reverting to volunteer help, the membership campaign was continued, in the hope that a stronger group might have more weight with Congressmen considering legislation. However, the membership declined to a low of 432 in mid-1944. The persistence of the presidents and other officers kept it alive. They continued to communicate with the Civil Service Commission and Members of Congress, endorsing beneficial legislation.

The postwar years saw a renewed vigor as servicemen and career employees returned from war-related assignments. Moreover, in 1945, the officers began discussing changing the organizational structure by establishing field chapters, for the members in the States had long felt that they were left

out of the activities. Membership increased markedly to 1435 by the end of 1947.

The year 1947 was a turning point in OPEDA's history. Revising the constitution, the council voted to employ on a part-time basis an Executive Officer, preferably a retired member "to meet with Members of Congress and Congressional committees and present our views on proposed or introduced legislation affecting OPEDA members in their public service." L.F. Kneipp, who had been Assistant Chief of the Forest Service, was selected and the Department continued to furnish office space. Kneipp's key points of interest, reported in his letter to members on February 20, 1948, were indicative of the past and future of OPEDA: liberalization of retirement, pay increase, increase in per diem allowance, liberalization of disability allowances, lifting the ceiling on federal salaries, sabbatical leave privileges for educational purposes, and a host of other questions. OPEDA included also among its objectives: enlarged membership, regional chapters, better publicity, promotion of high professional standards, adoption of OPEDA ideas by professionals in other Departments, and cooperation with other Federal employee organizations.

Newsletter Initiated

On July 12, 1948, the first issue of the OPEDA Newsletter was printed. The Executive Committee at its October 7 meeting approved publishing the paper at quarterly intervals, a policy continued essentially until 1956 when it was placed on a more frequent schedule. The first issue of the Newsletter emphasized the importance of regional organization, listing the centers where such was feasible. The following month, employees in Spartanburg, South Carolina, completed the formation of the first field chapter, but the dream of others continued unrealized until 1963. Although the officers had hoped that the membership might be doubled to about 3000 during the year, by October 1, the drive had increased it from 1,435 to 2,534, still only 10 percent of those eligible.

The employment of an "Executive Officer" strengthened the efforts of the officers. Early in 1949, the Council formalized a code of ethics, whose basic concepts continue to be those at the present. Then on October 18, 1949, OPEDA began to hold its luncheon meetings, at which members of Congress, officials from the Department and other government agencies, especially the Civil Service Commission, and related groups have spoken. The officers soon realized that the special cafeteria facilities would be inadequate sometimes, a situation that has been solved by having more prominent speakers appear in the Jefferson Auditorium. The eligibility list for membership in OPEDA was greatly extended as a consequence of the Classification Act of 1949, that combined the professional (P) grades and the clerical, administrative and fiscal (CAF) into General Schedules (GS). As a result, employees in GS-5 and above became eligible. Many in the former CAF group have added their support to the expanding activities and have benefitted from the advantages of membership.

The 1950's were years of steady growth. During the decade, the membership increased from 2,610 to 5,096. Usually about two-thirds of these were located in the field. After the resignation of Kneipp in late 1950, Frederick V. Rand, Leslie T. Mahurin, Walter L. Dutton, and Dillard Lasseter served in that order as Executive Officers. By mid-1951, OPEDA was urging that the Federal Government extend to its employees the principle that was gaining recognition in private industry, the adjusting of salaries in keeping with changes in prices. It also advocated the development of a system for executive training and selection. Following the testimony of W.L. Dutton in February 1954 at a Senate hearing on fringe benefits when he admitted that only about 2,200 professionals out of about 35,000 belonged to OPEDA, greater attention was given to recruiting members, as evidenced by an increase to 3,995 in 1955.

After several years of discussion, in March 1954, OPEDA adopted its emblem.

In 1954, OPEDA pointed with pride to its support of the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Act, under which Government personnel could obtain low cost insurance as long as they were in Federal employment or on retirement at a reduced valuation. Almost as soon as this was passed, OPEDA joined others in support of passage of a health insurance program, approved in September 1959.

In 1955, OPEDA played a major role in getting a bill through the Congress which would have credited certain Federal-State experience under the Civil Service Retirement act. Unfortunately, however, the bill was vetoed by the President.

OPEDA was coming of age. After years of depending primarily upon volunteer work, it had in 1948 employed an Executive Officer and part-time secretaries, who were housed in office space in the Department of Agriculture. In April 1956, the offices were moved to the Colorado Building at 14th and G Streets, Northwest.

Two years later, through arrangements with Mutual of Omaha, the first of the insurance plans—for income protection—was made available. On May 31, 1962, life insurance was added to the program, to be followed on March 1, 1963, by accident insurance, and on January 1967, by hospital indemnity coverage. One or more of these have attracted many to membership in OPEDA.

1958 also saw the beginning of the annual science fairs. The scientific projects exhibited were entered by students in secondary schools of the Washington Metropolitan area. Ralph Roberts, Administrative Assistant Secretary, commended the Organization for its sponsorship thus: "This offers a real opportunity to acquaint outstanding high school students with what the Department is doing as well as to recognize the students' achievements and to encourage them to pursue their scientific bent."

Executive Order 10988

OPEDA has long represented the interests of professional employees on Capitol Hill. It has worked closely with the Departmental Office of Personnel and other Departmental agencies. Working relations appeared to be changing with the issuance of Executive Order 10988 on January 17, 1962. This spelled out general policies on relations between management and employee organizations in the Federal Service. OPEDA was granted "formal recognition," on April 9, 1962, to represent its members. Subsequently, when the Department's revision of its regulations would have meant that many of the organization's officers who were in management positions would have had to resign if it were to continue in a status of "formal recognition," OPEDA asked that the recognition be withdrawn. It has continued to operate "under the influence and the shadow" of the Order. At the first biennial Convention in 1967, some of the delegates from field chapters urged that some sort of recognition should be allowed them as formal representatives of their members. A resolution was adopted at the Convention: "That in order to be consistent with the long-range goals of OPEDA, no attempt be made nationally to obtain recognition under E.O. 10988 as it now exists. However, if it be the considered judgment of a local chapter that its effectiveness is threatened, it may seek recognition." Two OPEDA chapters now have formal recognition under E.O. 10988—the WRRL at Albany, California, approved October 1968, and the New Orleans No. 1, New Orleans, Louisiana, approved April 1969.

Inasmuch as membership in the organization included many of the key personnel in the Department, it is not surprising that a number of them have received recognition from professional societies and under the Department's award program, instituted in 1947. On November 23, 1959, OPEDA inaugurated its own annual honor award for outstanding leadership and service when it presented such an award to Leon F. Kneipp.

Meeting the challenge of the sixties has been possible because of the work of earlier years and the organization's leadership. As OPEDA revised its Constitution and By-Laws in 1966 and shifted its organization to center around chapters in Washington and the field, it was developing an idea that had been under consideration for some time. The Secretary of Agriculture at the opening of the 1959 Science Fair had said: "It (the Fair) is an undertaking that local units of OPEDA and local USDA clubs can sponsor effectively in many parts of the country." In 1960, an intermediate step was taken when four regional subcommittees of the Professional Committee were established with regional coordinators to provide channels for suggestions to be presented to the Department or the Congress. Then a committee was appointed to study organizing more field chapters. With the establishment in June 1963, of the Southeast Alabama Chapter, the move was under way. The establishment of additional chapters, both field and in the Washington Metropolitan Area, has effected an increasing membership.

Biennial Conventions

On June 14, 1966, the Council approved the amended Constitution and By-Laws. It provided for government by an elected Board of Directors and by delegates chosen by chapters meeting in a biennial convention. The first national convention was held October 9 and 10, 1967, at the University of Maryland.

OPEDA has included in the scope of its interests problems affecting all employees, reaching beyond questions of pay, insurance, retirement, training, employee rights, and the like. It cooperated with other groups in the program of the Federal Employees for Action on Transportation (FEAT), organized in 1964. Its aim was "to give publicity to the needs of Federal employees in parking, public transportation and location of new Federal buildings." The organization also alerted employees when Congress was holding hearings on the proposed location of a heliport on the parking lot operated for Departmental employees by their Welfare and Recreation Association.

Although OPEDA has been concerned with the general welfare of Departmental employees, on occasion it has investigated individual complaints and has strived to resolve them. Conversely, many of its members have been primarily interested in "pocketbook issues" and have joined the organization to receive such benefits.

Throughout its history, the voice of OPEDA has joined that of other organizations seeking Congressional action to benefit Federal employees. Its paid leaders and elected officers have promoted such cooperation. In part, this has arisen from a realization that OPEDA's potential for influencing legislation would be increased as cooperation with other professional groups was promoted. In 1961, its officers were meeting with professionals in other agencies to assist them in forming similar organizations. In 1964, it signed memoranda of understanding with the Federal Plant Quarantine Inspectors National Association, Federal Professional Association, National Association of Federal Veterinarians, and Federal Tobacco Inspectors Mutual Association. It also assisted in the establishment in 1962 of the National Association of Federal-State Employees (NAFSE). OPEDA took the lead in forming the National Federation of Professional Organizations (NFPO) in 1966, consisting of fourteen member organizations representing 35,000 employees. OPEDA's Executive Director Chris Henderson served as President of NFPO for two terms. NFPO concentrated its initial effort on getting the 1967 Pay Bill passed. At one of the hearings, at which Mr. Henderson was testifying, Senator Morris K. Udall of Arizona commented on "the big turnout; the first ever of professionals."

OPEDA's second biennial convention was held at the University of Maryland on April 20-22, 1969. It reaffirmed the goals outlined in Section 26 of the Constitution and By-Laws and most of those adopted at the 1967 Convention, and adopted several additional goals. OPEDA's position on Executive Order 10988 (Employee Management Relations) was considered and the following resolutions adopted:

“That adequate and relevant materials be compiled and made available to the OPEDA membership as soon as possible and well before September 1969, and followed up, if deemed necessary, by personal contacts from the National Office to the chapters; and that a referendum of all OPEDA members be conducted soon thereafter to obtain an expression of opinion regarding various alternatives on the role of both national OPEDA and the individual chapters regarding E.O. 10988 and related matters.”

OPEDA serves in a unique way to benefit the USDA professional employee and improve service to the public by doing what others could not or would not do. It has played an important role in the Department. As a representative of Departmental employees, it has at times supported a position at variance with that of the Civil Service Commission. It has worked consistently to improve the image of the Federal employee, to act as the defender of the rights of civil servants, and to achieve comparability of pay and fringe benefits that similar personnel in the private sector were receiving.

OPEDA's PRESIDENTS

1929	Alfred F. Woods
	<i>Director of Scientific Work</i>
1930-31	C.C. Clark
	<i>Assistant Chief, Weather Bureau</i>
1932-33	Raymond E. Marsh
	<i>In Charge, Division of Forest Economics, Forest Service</i>
1934	Earl W. Sheets
	<i>Chief, Animal Husbandry Division, Bureau of Animal Industry</i>
1935-36	Stanley B. Fracker
	<i>In Charge, Div. of Plt. Dis. Cont., Bur. Entomology & Plant Quar.</i>
1937	Stanley B. Fracker
	Earl W. Sheets
1938-40	Lewis A. Jones
	<i>Chief, Division of Drainage, Soil Conservation Service</i>
1941-44	Samuel Goodacre
	<i>Sr. Administrative Officer Administration, Soil Conservation Service</i>
1944-45	Carleton R. Ball
	<i>Principal Agriculturist, Extension Service</i>
1946	Damon A. Spencer
	<i>Division of Animal Husbandry, Bureau of Animal Industry</i>
1947-48	Melvin C. Merrill
	<i>Chief, Division of Publications, Office of Information</i>
1949-50	Bennett A. Porter
	<i>In Charge, Div. of Fruit Insects Inv., Bureau of Entomology & Plant Quarantine</i>
1951-52	B. Ralph Stauber
	<i>Chief, Agricultural Price Statistics Branch, Agricultural Marketing Service</i>
1953-55	Christopher O. Henderson
	<i>Chief, Division of Training, Office of Personnel</i>
1956-60	Charles E. Burkhead
	<i>Chief, Field Crop Statistics Branch, Agricultural Marketing Service</i>
1960-62	Job K. Savage
	<i>Field Representative Southeast Area, Office of Rural Areas Development</i>
1962-64	Gordon D. Fox
	<i>Associate Deputy Chief, Administration, Forest Service</i>
1964-66	Thomas S. Ronningen
	<i>Assistant to the Administrator, Cooperative State Research Service</i>
1966-67	Earl R. Glover
	<i>Deputy Administrator, Agricultural Research Service</i>

1967-69	Lewis P. McCann <i>Staff Specialist, International Programs Division Agricultural Research Service</i>
1969-71	William E. Shaklee <i>Animal Geneticist, Cooperative State Research Service</i>

OPEDA's Executive Officers and Legislative Counsels

1948-50	Leon F. Kneipp <i>Retired Assistant Chief, Forest Service</i>
1951-52	Frederick V. Rand <i>Retired Plant Pathologist, Office of Experiment Stations</i>
1953-	Leslie T. Mahurin <i>Retired Executive Assistant, Branch of Operations, Forest Service</i>
1954-	Walter L. Dutton <i>Retired Chief, Division of Range Management, Forest Service</i>
1955-66	Dillard B. Lasseter <i>Former Administrator, Farmers Home Administration</i>
1966-July 1969	C.O. Henderson <i>Executive Director (Retired Assistant Director, Office of Personnel)</i>
Nov. 1969	Arthur R. (Art) Spillers <i>Executive Director (Retired Associate Deputy Chief, Forest Service)</i>

Appendix II

OPEDA'S MEMBERSHIP

1932	3,500	1949	2,865	1960	5,416
1933	3,967	1950	2,610	1961	5,395
1940	1,623	1951	2,602	1962	6,333
1941	1,000	1952	2,322	1963	7,004
1942	802	1953	2,293	1964	7,025
1943	720	1954	2,759	1965	7,196
1944	591	1955	3,995	1966	7,895
1945	935	1956	3,732	1967	8,504
1946	1,344	1957	4,476	1968	8,829
1947	1,435	1958	4,774	1969	9,196
1948	2,067	1959	5,096		(As of June)

Appendix III

OPEDA'S Honor Awards

1959	Leon F. Kneipp
1960	Stanley B. Fracker
1961	T. Roy Reid
1962	Charles E. Burkhead
1963	Christopher O. Henderson
1964	Erwin L. LeClerg
1965	Clyde F. Clark
1966	Joseph A. Becker
1967	Ralph W. Sherman
1968	Thomas S. Ronningen

OPEDA CHAPTERS AND DATE OF ORGANIZATION

Spartanburg, S.C.	August 1948 (Chapter later disbanded)
Southeast Alabama, Enterprise	June 1963
ERRL, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	May 1964
Georgia No. 1, Atlanta	October 1964
New Orleans No. 1, N.O., Louisiana	January 1965
Berkeley, Berkeley, California	May 1965
San Francisco, California	May 1965
WRRL, Albany, California	May 1965
Carioca, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	May 1965
Riverside, California	June 1965
Federal Center, Hyattsville, Md.	March 1966
Salt Lake, Salt Lake City, Utah	March 1966
Madison, Wisconsin	April 1966
Palouse, Pullman, Washington	April 1966
Spokane, Washington	April 1966
Beltsville, Beltsville, Maryland	May 1966
First New York, New York City	May 1966
Yakima Valley, Yakima, Washington	June 1966
Bozeman, Montana	July 1966
CSRS, Washington, D.C.	July 1966
MOPEDA, East Lansing, Michigan	July 1966
Orlando, Florida	July 1966
Sierra-San Joaquin, Fersno, California	July 1966
F.S.D.C., Washington, D.C.	August 1966
SRS, Washington, D.C.	August 1966
Capitol SCS, Washington, D.C.	September 1966
D.C. Interagency, Washington, D.C.	September 1966
Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska	September 1966
Savannah, Georgia	September 1966
C&MS, Washington, D.C.	October 1966
Clemson, South Carolina	October 1966
ERS, Washington, D.C.	October 1966
FCS Cooperators, Washington, D.C.	October 1966
Greater Kansas City, Kansas City, Mo.	November 1966
Northern Colorado, Fort Collins	November 1966
REA, Washington, D.C.	November 1966
Fort Worth, Texas	January 1967
Logan, Utah	January 1967
Memphis, Tennessee	January 1967
New York State, Syracuse	January 1967
Auburn, Alabama	February 1967
FAS, Washington, D.C.	February 1967
Louisiana, Alexandria, Louisiana	March 1967
Mississippi State College, Mississippi	March 1967
Rosslyn, Virginia	April 1967

College Station, Texas	June 1967
Palmetto, Lexington, S.C.	June 1967
Athens Area, Athens, Georgia	July 1967
East Carolina, Greenville, N.C.	July 1967
Columbia River, Portland, Oregon	August 1967
Southeastern North Carolina, Elizabethtown, North Carolina	August 1967
Stoneville, Mississippi	August 1967
Central Missouri, Columbia	September 1967
Hudson Valley, Averill Park, New York	September 1967
North Florida, Gainesville	December 1967
North Dakota, Bismarck	January 1968
Eastern Illinois, Champaign	February 1968
Hoosier, Indianapolis, Indiana	February 1968
Raleigh, North Carolina	May 1968
Denver, Colorado	July 1968
Hawaii State, Honolulu	July 1968
Sacramento, California	July 1968
Sioux Falls, South Dakota	August 1968
Richmond, Virginia	October 1968
Genesee, Batavia, New York	October 1968
Georgia Mountaineer, Gainesville	October 1968
Southern Minnesota, Rochester	January 1969
Huron, South Dakota	March 1969
Southern Idaho, Boise	March 1969
Chicago, Illinois	April 1969
Lake Cumberland, Somerset, Kentucky	May 1969
Arkansas, Little Rock	August 1969

OPEDA'S GOALS

OPEDA'S Second Biennial Convention outlined the following goals:

1. OPEDA shall work for continual civil service improvement in the recruitment of the best qualified persons available for the Department's scientific, technical, administrative, and other professional positions; training and development for maximum effectiveness and for satisfactory professional growth; adequate salary levels and other benefits which will attract and retain high-caliber professional employees interested in a career in agriculture; and the individual's desire for self-improvement, adherence to professional standards, and pride in the public service.
2. OPEDA membership be increased to 50 percent of those eligible by January 1973.
3. OPEDA have at least one chapter in every State by January 1973.
4. There be increased emphasis on removal of ceilings on numbers of personnel in given grade levels.
5. There should be increased emphasis on management, technical, and professional training within the entire USDA. Selection of trainees should be made on an equitable basis.
6. The National Office encourage and advise chapters and members to participate in the political process.
7. OPEDA restrict its congressional and administrative programs to carefully evaluated issues.
8. OPEDA maintain close liaison with USDA Office of Personnel to insure the best possible understanding by OPEDA members of vital regulations and policies.

OPEDA'S SERVICES TO ITS MEMBERS

1. Keeps them informed on matters affecting their interest through:
 - a. A monthly newsletter.
 - b. Letters to chapter presidents about current legislation and other matters affecting OPEDA members.
 - c. Distribution to chapter presidents of copies of minutes of national OPEDA Legislative Committee.
 - e. Stimulating meetings and luncheon forums, with authoritative speakers on significant topics of timely interest.
2. Coordinates its efforts on behalf of its members with those of the National Federation of Professional Organizations in projects of mutual concern and interest.
3. Recognizes outstanding service to OPEDA by individuals and groups through annual awards.
4. Makes available low-cost group insurance.
5. Improves the public's concept of OPEDA members through:
 - a. Initiating and actively supporting programs that portray to the general public the professional ability and accomplishments of its members.
 - b. Participating in the USDA-OPEDA annual science fair and international science fair.
 - c. Encouraging the chapters to:
 - (1) Publicize chapter activities through local media, including educational T.V.
 - (2) Participate in local science fairs by making professional services available.
 - (3) Make known to State and national legislators OPEDA programs and seek their support.
 - (4) Consider formation of a speaker's bureau to be the focal point for providing professional speakers to service clubs, schools, scouts, etc.
 - (5) Work with various youth groups by serving as merit badge counselors, conservation tour guides, etc.

